

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 26TH APRIL, 2021

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 22ND MARCH, 2021

“C538 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST REGARDING ABERTHAW POWER STATION SITE AND UK GOVERNMENTS STEP POWER STATION PROGRAMME (DL / ER) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –

(Urgent by Reason of the Need to Apprise Cabinet of the Submission of an Expression of Interest from the Vale of Glamorgan Council Regarding Aberthaw Power Station Site and UK Government’s Step Power Station Programme before the Deadline of the End of March 2021)

In October 2019, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy announced £220m funding towards the conceptual design of a fusion power station – Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP). STEP was an innovative plan for a commercially viable fusion power station, offering the realistic prospect of constructing a powerplant by 2040.

In November 2020, the UK Government released an invitation for Expressions of Interest to identify sites in the UK that could accommodate a STEP power station.

The report sought Cabinet’s endorsement for the Expression of Interest for the Aberthaw site to be considered as a site for the STEP power station.

The Deputy Leader emphasised that it was purely an expression of interest at this stage.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T, in principle, the submission of the Expression of Interest for the Aberthaw site as one of two sites in Wales to the STEP programme be endorsed.

(2) T H A T the Urgent Decision Procedure set out in Section 14:14 of the Council's Constitution in respect of Recommendation (1) be approved in order to meet the deadline for submission of 31st March, 2021.

(3) T H A T a further report be brought back to Cabinet in order to provide an update when further information becomes available.

Reasons for decisions

(1) The site chosen for STEP would have global visibility and would form the centre of a programme of activity supporting thousands of high-quality high-tech jobs. STEP would support economic growth, providing the opportunity to attract £1.5bn of inward investment, and the training of highly skilled engineers. It would also be an integral part of meeting the global net zero challenge. The Expression of Interest stage for the STEP programme required relevant Local Authority endorsement for sites which were being submitted.

(2) The reporting of the use of the Urgent Decision Procedure is a requirement of the Council's Constitution.

(3) To update Cabinet on the latest information.”